

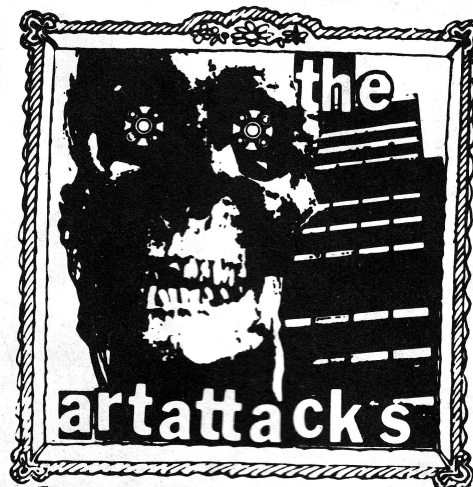
NEGATIVE REACTION

New crustacean **25p**
No 5 Feb/March

RICHARD
HELL



CLASH/MINK DE VILLE/SOFTBOYS



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Photo: Chris Diamond. Clash: the Com Exchange.

THE SEX PISTOLS

London, 1975, a street. Thousands of grey men crushing along in grey clothes and grey faces, and suddenly the grey goes out of focus as your eyes are assaulted by Him... bright orange David Bowie hair, green jumper, straight legged trousers, torn T-shirt, and a pair of burning eyes that sneer back at the hostility from the greyiness. A couple walk past, the girl stares at the Man With No Name in envy and rejection, she'd like to speak. He stares back in hate, he'd like to fuck. Her man threatens and abuses him, and they separate. Inside his head, he isn't a kid in a West-London street, he's an artist, a rock star, Clint Eastwood, and he's just shot six lemons out of a tree, and the street is burning. But he ain't no-one, and the only thing he's got to hide is his desire, but he will get out of here alive, and he will become a bassist in a new type of rock band...

London, 1975, another street. An ex-public school boy with a posh accent and no friends, who'd never lived in England except at school and who'd left all his friends at school. He has no local, no night out with the lads, no identity; he can't fit in with what's around him. Got to create a home, a voice a name a personality, a movement, so that there's something that's his. He's sick of being led by teachers, preachers, officers, magistrates, civil servants, broadcasters and artists - he's got to stand up, be able to walk down the street and stare back.

Bernie Rhodes: The London SS were 3 guys, Mick Jones, Tony James, and Brian James. I got them in a rehearsal room and watched them for two weeks, and I said

"You can all fuck off, but Mick can stay"...at one time Rat Scabies was in too. The London SS was a load of bollocks.

Joe Strummer: So in the beginning there was Mick...

M.R.: Six strings and a soul.

J.S.:...with long hair and platform boots, then Paul came along Mick taught him to play bass, and six weeks later, they asked me to join, so I said Alright.

"SO THIS IS WHAT THEY MEAN WHEN THEY SAY PUNK IS VIOLENT"

Cambridge, 1977, hotel lounge. The Clash have just returned from a gig which turned the Corn Exchange, but I worried..."The energy will go... now the band has fame and money, they'll move too far away from me... what you desire so much can't be real ...I feel silly being dressed up, silly dancing...punk is too intrusive I live real life too many hours a week to make it anything but hypocrisy..."

2a.m. we get to interview the Clash after the security men threw us out twice. Isn't that the whole deal, The Clash are righteous but beneath them are basket cases and discharged SAS hammerheads, and above them Bernard Rhodes, CBS, and Wall Street. The lounge is plush with deep

leather seats and thick carpets. A porter hangs around just to serve the band and their entourage with drinks and watch them carve up an enormous block of dope on one of his tables. When you're a punk rock star you can buy bourgeois comfort and protection but what else can you do? We sit down, Paul Simonon draws a pistol, takes careful aim, and shoots Richard Hell's guitarist in the head with a piece of spud - so this is what they mean when they say punk is violent? These guys have come a long way since 1975, so what are they proud of?

J.S.: (after a long pause) Nothing.

M.R.: Not even selling records? Or your first single? Doesn't that make a difference?

J.S.: No it doesn't. (Pause) I'm being perfectly honest, it doesn't make any difference.

M.R.: It's gotta be better than what you were doing two years ago, anyway.

J.S.: Yeah I'd say so.

M.R.: You must be proud of that.

J.S.: Yeah, but it's a pretty small matter to be proud of. I'm not the sort of person who does that really. It's just down to what you're like as a person. I don't stand around smirking about what a great guy I am; most of the time I think I'm a cunt. So I ain't proud of nothing yet.

The band has aimed, above all, to free itself from the problems of the

world outside, and thus to be free to do whatever they want.

Paul Simonon: I feel different, I do don't feel the same as ordinary people, I don't want to feel the same as ordinary people 'cos I've done what they've done and it's horrible.

And they really are different; if you or I were to do whatever we wanted, we'd die of terminal boredom, yet this band are free and they live in a manic state of 110% activity. They never take a passive role in anything they do so that, for instance, when we were interviewing them, they decided after a while that the roles should be reversed, and they interviewed us. Any new input that comes near the Clash is turned into a new energy source on which they feed, forming an energy circuit which shines out at their gigs where 2000 writhing bodies provide the energy to fire the Clash's music, which drives the kids further and further.

"IT'S QUITE A FEAT JUST AVOIDING BREAKING UP"

This frenzied lifestyle is merely the result of their desire for complete control over everything they do, the reason for the creation of the band. They have created their own style, their own music, their own clothes and their own audience. They will not lose control. CBS tried to usurp their control of record output when they released Remote Control last year, but were met with open hostility from the band who wrote Complete Control to replace it. But having four men living so close to one another in such a state of hyperactivity is bound to cause tensions.

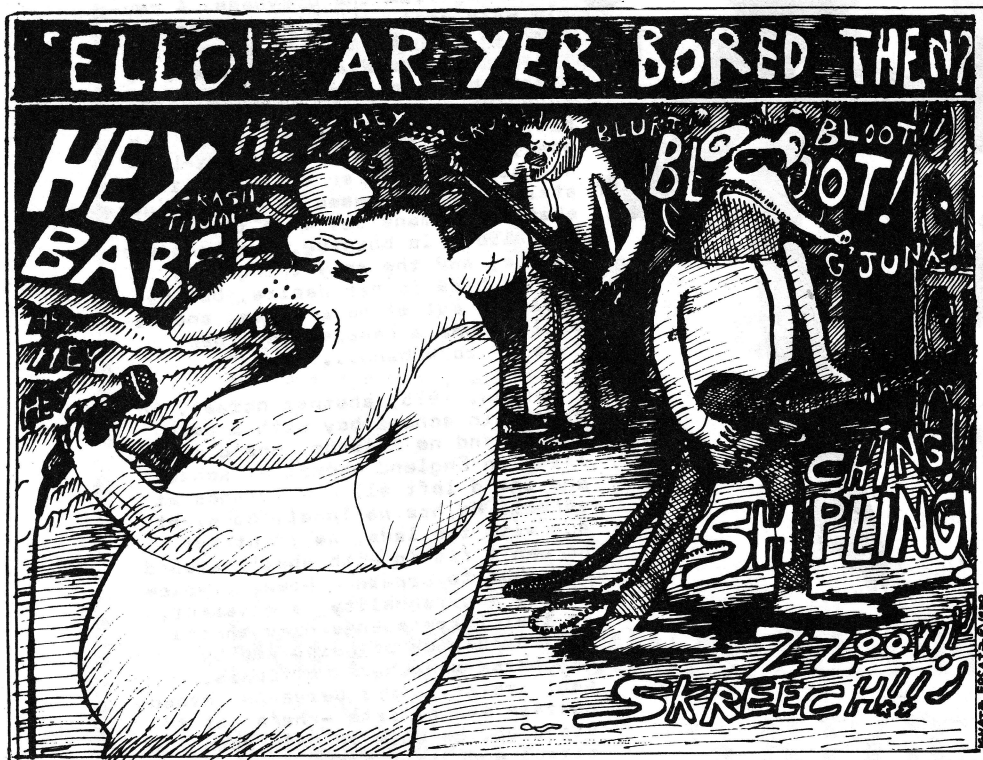
J.S.: It's quite a feat just avoiding breaking up. You could be in a room with this band when you wouldn't dare breathe, in case you breathed poisonous fumes.

P.S.: Yeah we're just four people who've been thrown together by wanting to be in a good group.

J.S.: How long it'll go on for, I don't know, but I feel like keeping it going.

M.R.: If it breaks, d'you think it'll be sudden?

J.S.: I dunnd, I just want to keep it going at the moment, I don't like to think about it... (Pause) yeah, I think so. It'll be "I'm fucking leaving" "You ain't so great, I'm leaving before you're leaving, fuck off".



But the reason they're going to carry on is that they know everything in Britain is dead compared with Punk Rock, and that they are producing more energy in the kids on the street than anything else, like tonight at the Corn Exchange.

The whole building shivers when the lights go up on the band. Metallic, vicious, obscene, sounds, a mutant son of reggae, heavy-metal, football chants and political sermon. They take on everything ugly in the world, and conquer; Punk is the soundtrack of the city, factories, traffic noise, dirt and anxiety. No escape, just conquest, an image driven home in your brain to shoot down every tension. The audience was ecstatic, they were dancing in the street. They must have stayed high for a week.

J.S.: it was good, the crowd was better than usual. How does Negative Reaction answer to this - how have you got to issue number 4 without mentioning any Cambridge bands? The point of being based somewhere is that you want to do something for the place that you're in. If you just report on the London groups, or the Manchester groups nothing's gonna happen in Cambridge. Tonight was one of the best nights on the tour, they didn't gob, or at least not much, I didn't have to tell them not to. You've got some pretty fucking good people in this town.

"ONE DAY A FUCKING GREAT GROUP'S GONNA WALK OUT OF CAMBRIDGE"

N.R.: There's very little talent in Cambridge though.

J.S.: There'll be even less if you don't do anything about it. One day a fucking great group's gonna walk out of Cambridge, and they're gonna walk out under your nose, and then you'll look stupid. You wanna keep your home fire burning, you wanna be giving them prominence. O.K., so the Clash come up to town, stick them in to get the punters in and give them the rest. How you make a place great is when everybody in there suddenly realises it's great. WE wouldn't have done what we did looking at what we had, like Patti Smith... we didn't bother with her. If we'd looked at New York then, it would be like you looking at London now. That crowd was one of the best nights of the tour.

N.R.: Do you often get beaten up?

P.S.: No I'm usually quite lucky, I usually get away, I'm quite clever. Sometimes you run, sometimes you talk to them. If you're walking in the road, and some kids cross the street and come towards you, you have to keep on walking. You don't

Photo: Shaleagh



run off 'côs you have to keep your dignity.

N.R.: Have you ever been beaten up as a band, like the Stranglers?

P.S.: No we haven't.

N.R.: Would it scare you off if you were

P.S.: No, I don't give a fuck; when I was a kid you were so scared of getting beaten up that it doesn't make any difference now.

N.R.: You get immune to violence?

P.S.: To a certain extent, yeah.

N.R.: Tell us about the origins of punk.

P.S.: It's kids who watch Top of the Pops, and they see all these shitty groups, and there's nothing to do. And they see a guy play a guitar in a club, and they think it takes about a hundred years to learn to play. So all it is, is kids getting up and doing something on their own, even if it is only three chords. But they bring a whole new freshness into music.

N.R.: Where do you think they're going

P.S.: To more creative groups in the future, so when we pack up, other people are going to do the same and bring something good out.

N.R.: Is it going to end up in a circle, like the Stones to the Sex Pistols?

P.S.: Yeah, I think it's a good idea. When the Stones started, they used to piss up against garage walls and at that time everyone thought it was really disgusting, but now people can piss on the wall and nobody minds. Now the TV people are shocked by punks swearing, but freedom of language is going to come in. When we and the Pistols are finished there's going to be another load of musicians.

N.R.: But where's it going to end up?

P.S.: I think by the time I'm 28 or 30 I'm going to quit anyway.

N.R.: What, quit the music business completely?

P.S.: Yeah, finito.

N.R.: What then?

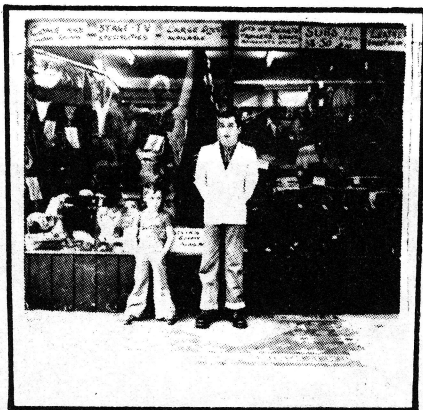
P.S.: I'd like to go into films.

N.R.: Do you want to act?

P.S.: Well yeah, but I don't know if I could; I'd like to act in films like Clint Eastwood.

Paul Simonon knows it's coming to an end someday, he's ready to be unknown again... and some new band is really hot, and there's new energy flying around... and the Man With No Name is walking down a London street again, looking for some heat.

Dave
Burnett(e) Duncan.
Andrew



ALBUMS -

1. NEW BOOTS & PANTIES - Ian Dury (Stiff)
2. THE CLASH (C.B.S.)
3. MARQUEE MOON - Television (Elektra)
4. MY AIM IS TRUE - Elvis Costello (Stiff)
5. HEROES - David Bowie (R.C.A.)
6. Talking Heads '77 (Sire)
7. Never Mind the Bollocks - 'Pistols (Virgin)
8. Rattus Norvegicus - Stranglers (U.A.)
9. Lust for Life - Iggy Pop (R.C.A.)
10. Future Games - Spirit (Mercury)
11. Before & After Science - Brian Eno (Polydor)
12. Echoes of the 60's - Phil Spector (Ditto)
13. Exodus - Bob Marley (Island)
14. Listen Now - Phil Manzanera/801 (Polydor)
15. In the City - The Jam (Polydor)
16. Rock n' Roll with the Modern Lovers (Berserkeley)
16. Mink de Ville (Capitol)
18. Heavy Weather - Weather Report (C.B.S.)
19. Aja - Steely Dan (Sire)
20. Low - David Bowie (R.C.A.)

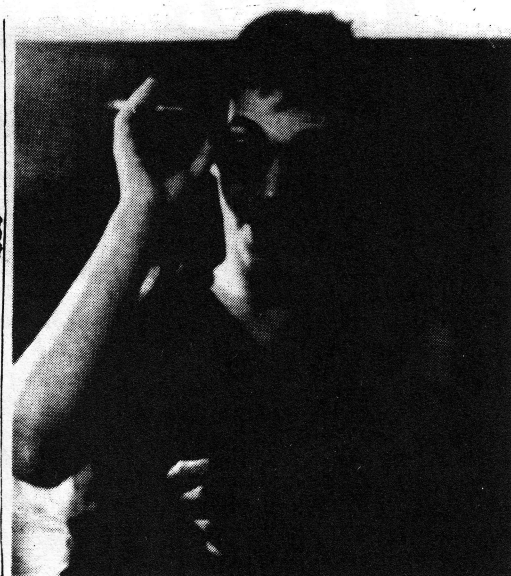
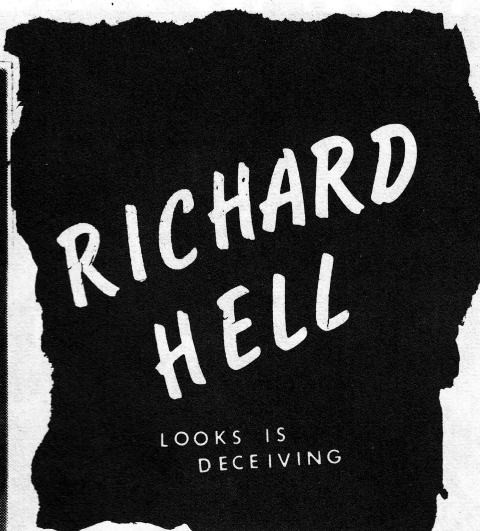
SINGLES -

1. SEX 'N' DRUGS 'N' ROCK 'N' ROLL - Ian Dury (Stiff)
2. OH BONDAGE UP YOURS - X-Ray Spex (Virgin)
3. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN - Sex Pistols (Virgin)
4. I FEEL LOVE - Donna Summer (G.T.O.)
5. LOKANE - Dillinger (Black Swan)
6. Love Lies Limp - Alternative T.V. (S.G.)
- 6= Pretty Vacant - Sex Pistols (Virgin)
8. White Riot - The Clash (C.B.S.)
9. Up Town Top Ranking - Althea + Donna (Lightning)
10. Whole Wild World - Wreckless Eric (Stiff)
11. Sheena is a Punk Rocker - Ramones (Sire)
12. Looking After No 1 - Boomtown Rats (Ensign)
- 12= Born for a Purpose - Dr Alimantado (Greensleeves)
- 12= Sweet Gene Vincent - Ian Dooory (Stiff)
15. No One / Incendiary Device - J. Moped (Chiswick)
16. Watching the Detectives - Elvis Costello (Stiff)
17. 2-4-6-8 Motorway - Tom Robinson Band (EMI)
- 17= Sound + Vision - Bowie (R.C.A.)
19. Stranded - The Saints (Harvest)
20. Dangerous Rhythm - Ultravox! (Island)

E.P.'s -

1. Spiral Scratch - Buzzcocks (New Hormones)
2. Give it to the Softboys (Raw!!?)
3. Animal Justice - John Cale (Illegal?)
4. Two-Headed Dog - Roky Ericson (~)
5. The Pink Porky - Graham Parker (Vertigo)

COMPILED ON A POINTS SYSTEM BY MEMBERS OF THE NR BOARD



LOOKS IS deceiving, as the Gladiators would tell it to you. For proof, look no further than the hefty brown envelope that Richard Hell always carries about with him. Inside you'll find enough photos to fill NR for three years; Burning Spear, the long-haired Dead Boys, the short-haired, blond-haired Television.

And secreted at the bottom, in an even smaller envelope; three antique pictures of Richard Hell in tweeds, leaning forward goggle-eyed in granny glasses and long disturbed hair, like your demented Aunt Matilda locked in the attic 10 these last thirty years.

These days, it's a different story. White skin, purple shades, ripped T-shirt (the originator, y'now), a new stick insect. Lester Bangs sees him as the Poet Racked With Pain, Angst in every vein, etc. Nothing could be further from the truth. After some impassioned hassling from Bernard Rhodes, ("Where were you two years ago, maan?"), Jimmy Olsen and I left the job of a Clash interview to NR's auxiliary mob, and decided to pay a call on Mr Hell at his hotel.

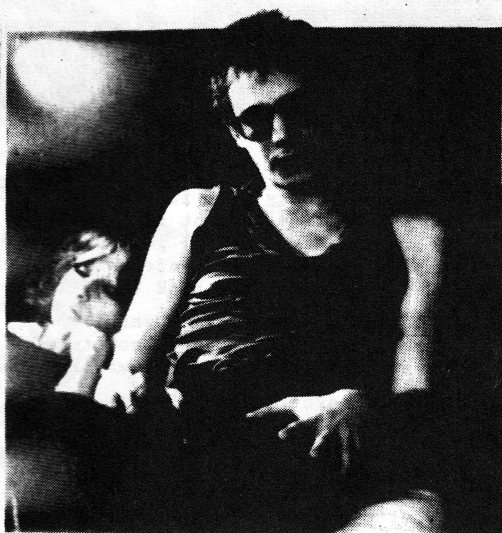
No problem. Hell opens the door. "Interview, huh? OK, man, lemme just see this movie first."

He stretches out on one of the bed beds and concentrates on the screen. Guitarist Ivan Julien is crashed out on the other one, half-heartedly picking at a can of tuna fish. No SHEER PAIN here, they're both genial guys. Richard sends for some beers and tosses over the batch of fanzines and photos. "Keep yourself amused."

We sit through the movie, James Garner a his blonde, cheating crooked cavalryman Sterling Hayden out of the old Pole's gold. Eyes flick on and off the screen, words are exchanged, Robert Quine drifts in and out, and Richard disappears only to return with a trayful of sandwiches.

"Let's hear the album first", he decides, and Quine is summoned with a fold-out record player. His bald head and doleful expression give him the look of a beat poet who's just found out There's No Point Anyway.

"I just made another call to New York", he announces in a tired monotone.



"Heh heh", I observe, "record company expenses, no doubt."

"I wish it were", he shrugs, and drifts out. The Void-oids are justifiably angry with Sire for failing to release the album in the UK in time to coincide with their support tour to the Clash. The band had just played a so-so set at the Corn Exchange, which wasn't helped much by the audience not being familiar with the material. Strangely enough, the only really exciting point in the set was a very canine rendition of a non-original, Iggy's "I Wanna Be Your Dog".

But the album is something else, more spiky and inaccessible than the 1976 Stiff/Ork tracks laid down by the nascent Void-oids.

The first question is fired, but Hell ain't talking.

"D'you wanna talk or listen?"

Sorry, sir. On the other channel, the silent screen is showing another Western. Hell glares, moth agape: "Goddammit, it's Sterling Hayden AGAIN!!"

"Another World" spirals to the end of side two, and the interview proper begins. I started by asking Richard his opinion on Lester Bangs' recent Hell feature in the

NME, a singularly high-flown dissertation incomprehensible to anyone unfamiliar with the works of Lautreamont and Huysmans, Hell's literary heroes and plumbers of the abyss.

"I thought it displayed the compactness of his grey matter. At least 90% of the criticisms he makes are refuted in the very quotes that I say in the article. For example, where he says something like 'Richard wallows in his own self-pity, that's why I reject him'...

Whereas I'd just pointed out to him that before you can get past something, you've got to acknowledge it - that's what I was doing in the songs he was talking about. Everything he gets so violently self-righteous about is an obvious misinterpretation. Virtually every journalist came to me with preconceived ideas, and the purpose of the interview was to confirm those ideas whether or not they were true."

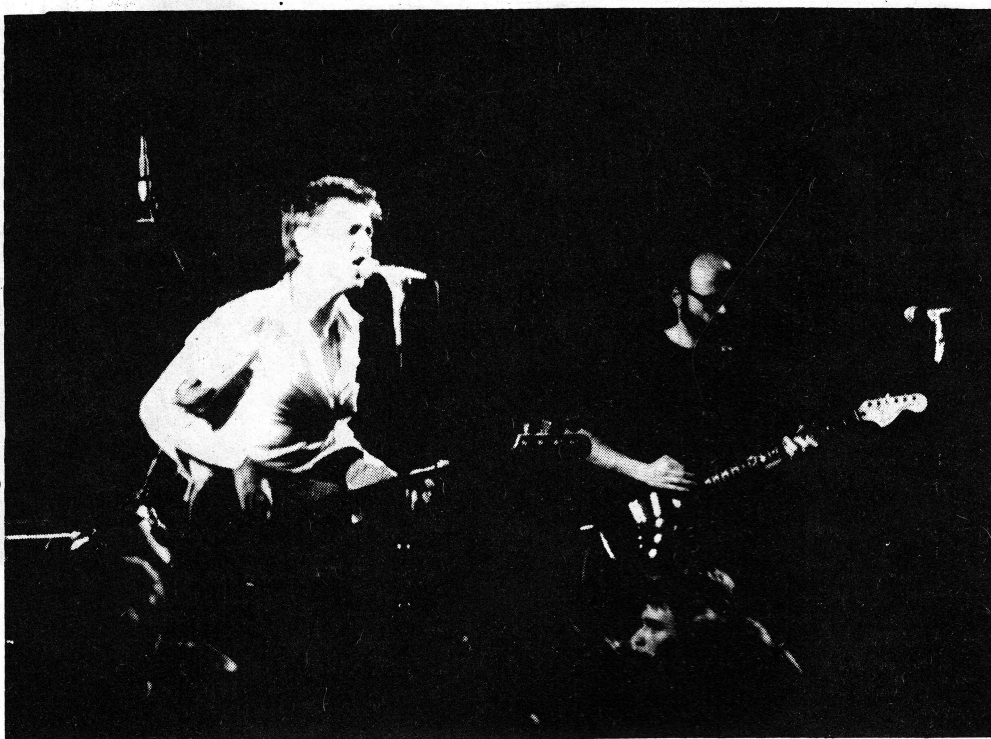
NR: Maybe Bangs tries to turn rock journalism into art...

RH: Well, I think there's potential for a rock journalist to be an art artist. I guess there is for anybody that writes...er, I'm trying to think of someone that I regard as having accomplished it. I can't

think of any rock critic whose book I'd want to read. I used to - when I was at school, you know, I used to enjoy reading Lester 'cos he'd turn me on to a lot of stuff I'd never heard of. But I've changed a lot since then. I can't think of any other critic whose stuff I like like that. There's a lot of these books, I'm always hoping there'll be one I really like; I've read Christgau's book, Greil Marcus' book, but I've never found one that I really liked.

NR: What about Patti Smith's legendary interview with Eric Clapton, the one that allegedly got her fired from Cream...she just asked him for his nine favourite words. Maybe she could have transcended in rock journalism.

RH: Well, everything she writes is



of interest. But she left journalism - I think that indicates something. I've written a couple of articles myself, when I was really broke, and Lisa Robinson told me I could get 75 dollars for 4000 words or something. A good writer will write well whatever the subject, but I don't think there are that many good writers in rock, they're just frustrated stars.

I quote some journalist or other as saying that Richard once described himself as being primarily a poet rather than a musician, but he denies this vehemently. In fact, in his interview with Vivien Goldman in the October 8 '77 Sounds (very entertaining and perceptive, if a bit low on hard info), he's quoted as saying, "Poetry's a dead end. Poets are repulsive, bitter people in a confining, disgusting situation." (Try telling that to Guillaume Apollinaire.) But Richard's earliest affiliations were literary. earliest affiliations were literary. When he was still calling himself Richard Meyers, he set up the first imprint for his own poetry collections, the most notorious of which is 'Wanna Go Out?' by Theresa Stern, which on a brief flick-through seemed oblique and not a little lurid. Part, if not all, of the chimeric Ms Stern is R. Meyers, but not being quite clear about the facts, whether Tom Miller, aka Verlaine, is also in on the conspiracy, I'd advise you to check it out yourself. As well as a collaboration with the New Queen of Ethiopia, Patti, he's also compiling his own fanzine, the 'Void-oid' - he feels more sympathy with fanzine writers because they're not paid hacks getting other peoples kicks for them. While I'm on the subject, last year threw up the Fanzine Writer as a Social Type, and it'd be interesting to see a piece on this complex breed, their illogical passion

and the pretty well insoluble problems they delight in causing themselves. Maybe I'll get round to it if I'm feeling adequately pissed off. Still...back to Hell...

NR(continuing the same theme): Do you see yourself ever concentrating more on non-musical writing?

RH: It doesn't seem unlikely that I would write a book again someday.. could be 5 years or 20 years. It's not something I have in mind. But then there's this book with Patti. That's fun. We just get together and take turns at the typewriter. Writing is real lonely for me. It's fun to collaborate with someone who's inspiring. Writing never really came easy to me; that's work and I hate work.

Another grim aspect of rock work, and one you'll find most musicians grumbling about, is the tedious slog of sound checks, if they can get 'em. The Clash tour has been tough for the Void-oids not only because of record company problems - Richard is pretty sick of a poster they've put out, with the pic from the album sleeve, only with green skin and no eyes ('They're trying to make me look like some kinda monster, Alice Cooper or something') - but also because of exhaustion and low morale:

"It's really miserable, I've been sick all the time, never got a sound check, completely sabotaged by the record company who never brought the record out. We haven't yet put on a show which everyone has been unconditionally pleased with. And now my voice is going from the combination of flu and singing. Just the fact that the record's not out makes us all feel so frustrated, you feel like you're doing it in a void, like you're writing your name in water. Y'know, very day, it's just frustrations."

BLANK GENERATION on Sire, is the name of the album, and it makes a case for Lester Bangs' obsession with the man's pain, if for no other reason than that it's extremely uncomfortable to listen to. The sound is edgy and spiky, and the guitars behave in just the way you don't expect them to, jerking off in strange crippled tangents. The same is true of the song structures, and it's as if there's some kind of guilt at work within Hell, that stops him from letting things follow their 'natural' course. No easy melodies here, but tunes that turn into monsters halfway.

Side One kicks off with the frantic 'Love Comes In Spurts', which boasts an alarming solo by Robert Quine (I think). 'Liars Beware' has a fiery, disorientating opening and a bitter attack, but, as with some of the other songs, it somehow adds up to a vaguely comic effect: 'Look out you pompous jerk'. Is this man laughing the world in the face? 'New Pleasure' is jerkier yet, with a very Beefheartian intro, but the weirdest thing on the side is 'Betrayal Takes Two', where the lyrics are, for once, audible (you don't get a lyric sheet in the UK copy, so I'm not willing to make any comment on the words). This song is a weird ballad parody, with the feeling of a cut, a kind of analyst's 'Crippled With Nerves'. 'Down At the Rock n Roll Club' is more stilted amusement, a celebration, but beneath the punchy rocking, it feels like he's too scared to enjoy it. Winding up this side, 'Who Says?', about which you can draw your own conclusions, because too many critics have found themselves in deep water over it.

Side Two is more comfortable - four longer tracks, two of them already familiar, the title track and the marathon 'Another World', which, in this version, is more strung out than ever, stretching on and on to cracking point. As for 'Blank Generation', it's lots more punchy than its prototype, but it also points up just how taut the band have become since their early days. Marc Bell hammers away furiously, a rampant fury throughout. 'The Plan' is a bouncy Nietzschean vignette, Hell's rock (comic) opera. Set atmosphere piece is the Fogerty Bros' Golliwogs epic 'Walking On the Water', which is transformed into an eerie scene of apocalypse. Quine, I assume, excels at a solo that has a unique and gem-like nature. It's also the nearest reference point to suggest Hell's former involvement with Television. A rare track.

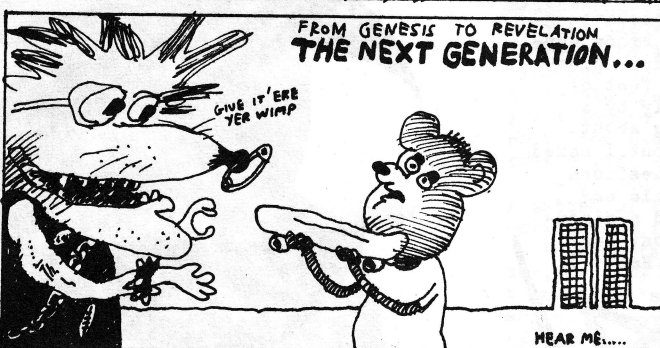
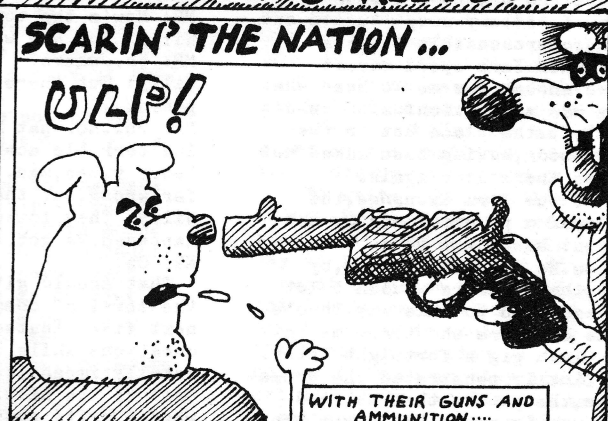
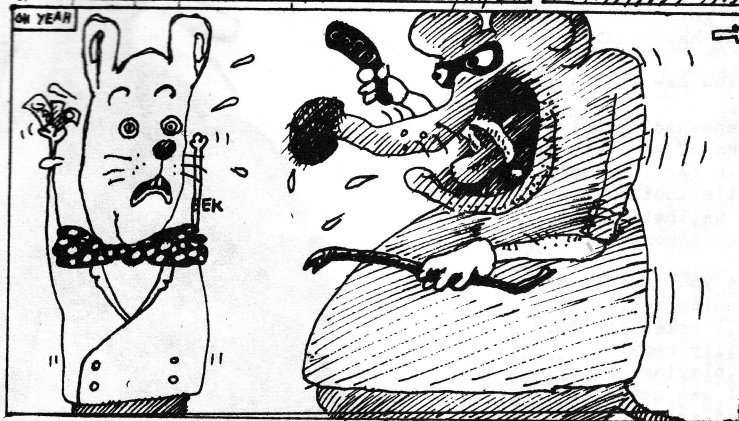
I've probably glossed over the album in the most amenable way, but without a lyric sheet, I'm not about to stick my neck out. All I'm really prepared to say is that this is a challenging album, and exactly how worthwhile the struggle will be...well, who knows?

Sounds is deceiving too, y'know.

-Jimmy O./Jon R.

NO COMPASSION COMIX

© 1978
IGNATZ
ERSATZ



This was going to be an extensive feature based on an interview I did with Willy de Ville when the band came to Cambridge back in October, on their tour with Dr. Feelgood. It's a bit out of date now, but it's still worth printing some of the transcript, because the guy said some interesting and revealing things. It's also the weirdest interview I've ever done, partly because it took place in about 10 different locations, including a broom cupboard, and partly because I spent half an hour trying to get a solitary word out of the guy, only to be treated to some very impassioned outpourings at the end.

The evening started in ominously weird circumstances, when, on the way to the show, I met Louie Erlanger (guitar) and Bobby Leonards (piano) of the band, whom I'd met at the Marquee, when we were all investigating Roogalator. They were looking for a bowl of soup, and needed a guide to local eateries; I made the fatal mistake of taking them to a place staffed entirely by Chinese waiters. This may not seem a bad error, but the Oriental pronunciation of 'celery soup' turned out to be incomprehensible to ears tuned to New York speed-rap. It was hard enough for me to hear what the guy was saying. Confusion ensued and we left the place not in the best of moods, having been asked not to darken their door again.

Back at the Corn Exchange, the band played a powerful steamy set and I went backstage to do the interview. No original photos, by the way; the bouncers wouldn't let Chas Diamond in to take any. That's the same bouncers who threw me out of the Clash gig a fortnight later. When I finally penetrated the dressing room, the powers that be told me to hurry it up. De Ville was non-communicative and knackered besides, so while he perused the latest Zigzag, I decided not to waste time, and tried to get some comments out of bassman Ruben Siquenza.

NR: Er, could you translate your Spanish rap on 'Spanish Stroll'?

RS: Well, it's this guy saying, Rosita, where are you going with my car? You know I love you, why'd you do me like that, you already stole my TV and my radio...

At this point, Willy looks round angrily; 'Hey, this guy don't waste no time; fer Chrissake...'

Reviewer retires tactfully and

enters into abortive conversation with Mrs de Ville, Toots, who looks like a Fellini vision of Ronnie Spector in bleached face, beehive, and hootenanny slacks. It's abortive because her New York accent is so extreme, a totally oblique drawl, that this time I'm up against the Chinese waiter Syndrome, and have to nod my head mutely, while trying to salvage what words I can. 'Uh... Willy's an Irish tinker, y'know ... you saw us in Paris, huh? I like the French, if they think you're an asshole, they'll tell you...'

Finally, Willy's donned the now-legendary snakeskin jacket, and is ready to talk. Well, not that ready to talk. Don't let anyone tell you New Yorkers are all the same. The most 'New York' person I'd met so far was Zecca Esquibel, of the Cherry Vanilla band, a real barrel of monkeys. De Ville, on the other hand, don't give nothing away. The interview starts in the dressing room, where I fire a question at him. He cranes his neck round to the doorway through which the Feelgood Sound comes crashing. 'Uh, I think we'd better go somewhere quieter', he drawls. A spectacularly seedy bog provides some respite from the racket and the tape rolls:

NR: How's the tour going?

Willy: You saw what happened?

NR: Uh... where?

Willy: Out there. You saw what happened...

NR: Uh... no. What happened? (Imagining terrible scenes of violence and heavy vibes, man. In fact, I wasn't far wrong, but that's another story)

Willy: They loved us, that's what happened. We got two encores.

NR: Oh.

That should give you an idea of the level of communication. For the next five minutes, I asked standard questions while Willy remained totally impassive, playing Johnny Cool to the hilt. I was grateful when a hefty geezer evicted us to use the room for more relevant matters. We retired to a broom cupboard; Willy closed the door, plunging us into two square feet of pure, darkness, broken only by a lighted fag-end hovering about an inch away from my snout. I asked a couple of tentative questions about the band's erstwhile sax player, Steve Douglas, and a disembodied voice gave the most basic replies. We emerged from Hades at

the sound of the bell, and returned to the bog. I artfully extracted the information that on their new album, the band will again be produced by the famed Jack Nitzsche (who, for my money, did a rather limp job on the first one, but that's as maybe). Didn't Uncle Jack vow never to work with a rock band again after he got through with you?

Willy: He hates workin' with rock n' roll bands - except for us and the Rolling Stones. He's an odd guy, I love Jack, we're very close.



WILLY DE VILLE

Enter a HEFTY GEEZER

HG: Oi, do you mind? I wanna have a slash in 'ere.

We moved out again, this time to the alley at the back of the theatre. The Canvey Sound still rings out. 'Goddammit', snarls de Ville, 'I still can't get away from it. Wanna take a walk?'

We head out into the streets, towards the band coach. A bunch of typical straight English rock fans, the sort Jimmy Olsen characterises as 'the coachloads from Luton', through the street, having been un-

GODDAMMIT... I'LL
GET EVEN WITH
YOU, YOU FUCKIN'
CRITIC!!

able to get in to see their heroes from Oil City. They stare in wonder at this incongruous figure in ducktails and snakeskin, and one of them in particular gives full reign to his powers of observation.

'Hey, you look like Mink de Ville! Doesn't he look like Mink de Ville?' he shouts. Then...realisation dawns. 'Hey, you are him!' And he rushes across the street to shower appreciation on him. 'It's really good to see you man! Your music's great! I dig your jacket! Will you give me your autograph? Come on, you gotta give me your autograph, Willy! Gonna give me a cigarette, too? Hey, maaan...well, uh, I just come off my Norton 750, y'know, maaan...'

The circle of surrounding friends and schoolgirls giggles admiringly while the object of their attention, needless to say, keeps two hundred per cent cool. 'Norton 750, huh?'

'Yeah, well, like, y'know, we don't stock Harleys. I'm gonna keep this cigarette packet for the rest of my life.' Suddenly, he decides to check out who's this guy with the tape recorder. 'You interviewing him? Who're you?'

I think quick. 'I'm Lester Bangs, man. You heard tell of me?'

'Who'd you write for?'

Oh, well, never give a sucker an easy break. I waved a copy of this magazine at him.

'Oh, yeah - if it's not as late as Sniffin Glue, I'll buy it every week.'

Comfortably settled in the band coach, Willy told me his views on British audiences. 'They're mixed up. They very easily fall to fads. When I was younger, I never went in for no fads, I was an outcast, 'cause I didn't wear a Beatle haircut. I got my nose broken 'cause I wore a ducktail. Prejudice will get us nowhere. Violence is bullshit, I grew up in a violent neighborhood. Violence is unnecessary; prejudice is ignorance. I don't think the British are that ignorant - do you? But I think 95% of people are assholes. People have got a lot to learn - to be really poor. Poor people, I feel for them, that's what my music's about.'

How do you feel about the glorification of the street myth - like Springsteen, for example?

'Springsteen? He's from New Jersey, I'm from Manhattan. I don't think there's any violence in my music.' He pauses, then adds meaningfully, 'There might be in the next album, 'cause I have a real hate for critics.'

Critics - the magic word. If you want to get this guy really worked up, use the word 'critic' - pronounced with a snarl and the lip turned back to reveal a sneer of pure hate and disgust. 'If I made it big, there'd be no more critics, I'll see to that, they'll all be pushing brooms', and catching sight of my apprehensive look, reassures me, 'You're not a critic, you're a columnist, right?'

'Well, I review records as well.'

'Well, when you do, make sure you use constructive criticism, don't be harsh on 'em, cos man, I'll tell you, what they work on, it's a creation, and it hurts to have somebody kick it... Critics need a

little more finesse instead of dictionaries, a little more heart. Critics just say, this sounds like this, this sounds like that... Gene Pitney sounds like Clyde McPhatter! Do you know that's a truth, that's a fuckin' truth! GENE PITNEY SOUNDS LIKE CLYDE MCPHATTER! That's a FUCKIN' TRUTH!!'

'Er...the thought hadn't crossed my mind. Who said that?'

'I do! And that's the goddam truth. But the point is, they're two different things. I was talking to Phil Lynott, he said the same thing. They always compare him to Springsteen. Springsteen? Aaah... (gesture of disdain) If you got a Picasso and a Monet, do you compare? They ain't got no idea... to me, critics don't have any fuckin' business in this business at all. They talk too much. They talk, and they read too much! They don't feel enough here! (pounding his heart) Some of the critics I'd like to catch in an alleyway, they'd never type again. Cause when they kick my baby, my album...', he glares at me, the heat and the venom really mounting, and spits out:

'...I KILL... I'm dead serious about that. I hate all critics, what do they know? Critics are a con to sell newspapers to kids, dumb 13-year old kids who read Rolling Stone, see a bad review, say, well, this guy says it's shit, I won't buy it. Critics are the slime of the earth, they don't know nothing about music!'

'To write a column, that's one thing... Do you know my roadies get more than I get? What would you say if I told you I get £8 a day? I sweat blood on stage, and some critic... (snarls) If I found a critic now... My whole thing with the music is emotion - I feel as cold and jaded as they are, they got something ticking inside there I gotta dig out, 'cause there's very little of it in the world today. Maybe I'm fighting a losing battle...'

Are you really willing to lay it on the line to win that battle?

'Sure. If I crucify myself...' he adds dramatically. 'If I have to suffer to that point...'

He's about to elaborate, when just then the tour manager walks up. 'Hey you're gonna suffer from pneumonia out here...' His rage abated by this apt piece of bathos, the martyr says his farewells, 'Send me a copy at EMI, see you around, man...'

...and as the tour bus heads off down the road, the Critic, that base

Serpent that walks like a man heads back to the Corn Exchange in time to catch the last few numbers of Dr Feelgood's set. With the exception of Jerry Byrne's 'Lights Out', the Critic doesn't like what it hears. In fact, it even considers writing a review of it, and ripping it to shreds...

...except that it's too frightened, man. It's goddam sweating...

-Jon Romney.

ROOTS REACTION

ROCKERS IYAH!

CHUCKING TO the riddum at the Nashville (just doesn't sound right as the name of a reggae venue, does it?)

OK, so Sowns and New Musical Regress have told you - Red, Gold and Gold is the colour of this week's new wave and that's all right by me my breder.

Sounds of Zion stepping out of North Kensington - Black Slate rock the musical atmosphere under heavy duty manners - the rockers are feeling ired and I is with I, As Tapper Zukie man ah say: "This music make you walk and this music make you talk/ And this music make you say it's sound a boss." Love it uni-versally, love it i-ficially.

If this piece of prose don't mean a t'ing to you so far, let me put you straight: Black Slate play music that makes you move your limbs, whether you want to or not. Rhythm with a neon illuminated capital R.

Lead vocalist Keithroy Drummond must be one of the happiest and most confident performers around at the moment. Alright, so you know that he may not be 100 per cent genuine in the praises he sings to Jah-Ras-Tafar-I, but at least now we can sway and step to the sounds instead of jumping and jerking. Neither can it be all bad that the

'Nasty Nasty' and 'Anarchist-uh' chants are gradually being replaced by 'One Love' and 'Get up and fight for your rights'.

'Declaration of Rights' is the opener and this version makes the other two I've heard (by the Abyssinians and Johnny Clarke) pale in comparison. These guys are some of the tightest musicians I've heard for quite some time. Ras Elroy Bailey on bass (the one with the ear to ear grin and dreadlocks at right-angles to each other) and the excellent Desmond Levi on drums create a rock-steady foundation for the other four to build on.

Two highlights: an extended version of 'Sticks Man' (Why didya do dat) and a point in the set where all six of 'em are huddled round the drum-kit knocking out different rhythms - laying down the roots of reggae rock, as Keithroy puts it.

This gig was one of the most exciting and enjoyable I've ever witnessed and apart from last year's Costello residence, it was the only time I've seen the whole Nashville rocking.

Got Ta Get Stepping - y'know. Never gonna stop Natty Dread from livin' up ya.

-Chris Green.

Merger/ Nashville.

Down at the Nashville on a Thursday night to get my first hearing of the much-lauded Steel Pulse, only to find that they'd pulled out and been replaced by a less familiar name to me, Merger. Out of the new wave of British reggae bands, Pulse, Black Slate and the rest/ Merger, like Aswad, are among the few to have put their sound on an album, although meeting with a certain degree of critical disappointment. (for fax freaks, the album features Pam Nestor who was Joan Armatrading's lyricist in the early days).

Anyway, how much can you say about a good Reggae band - you've got to vibrate to the bloody thing! Merger are a five-piece - the only names I can recall are Winston Bennett on guitar and the Osei brothers of Ghana on keyboards and splendid galloping drums respectively, a stone-faced dreadnaut on bass, and an exuberant guitar/frontman who elicited a cheer from the audience when he removed his beanie, letting forth a flow of Judean locks.

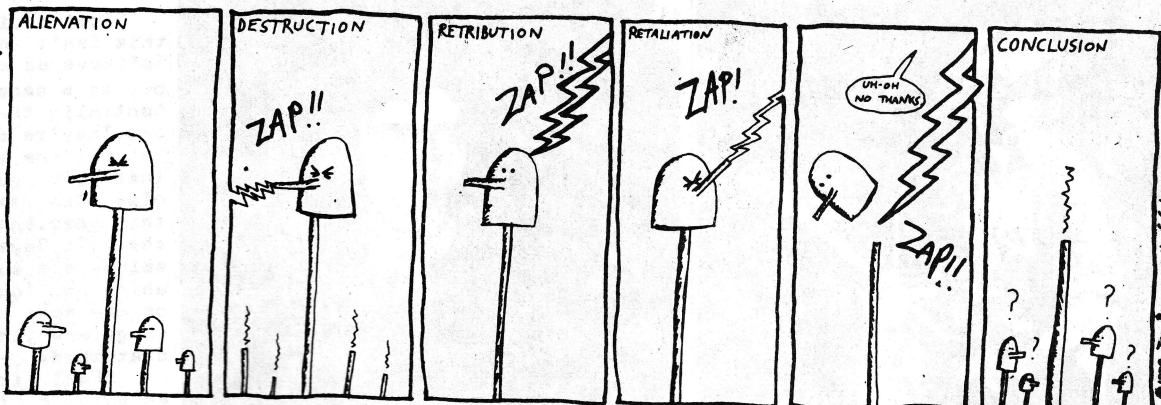
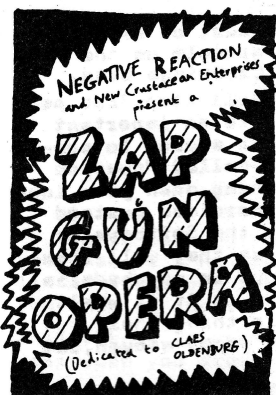
Much talk of the fusion implied in their name but what really comes across, is not any merging with rock/ jazz/ soul, but more African/showbiz influences. Basically Merger just sound like good Reggae and a cool bop when you've got a drop or two of London's finest inside of you. I don't usually move too much and surrounded by pogoers, ramrod-vertical is the best shape to take. Tonight was no such case. Boppin' and Thwakkin' 'til me knees go sore. As a result of which it was pretty impossible/unnecessary to take notes.

One thing that did annoy me was the percussion break where they all got into their Osibisa cross-rhythms which was a bit unconvincing; they work best when they sustain their concentrated rockers mood.

The Softboys were an incongruous support and their brand of quirky psychedelia didn't go down well with the predominantly white audience (the lead singer said it was like playing in a jelly) but they're unorthodox enough to break down the barriers that are getting pushed away by fine reggae bands like Merger.

Ollie 'Mole' West





Somewhere in this concrete maze on the south bank, I lost track of time, it's almost enough to make you lose your mind...How can all these things be 40, 50, 60 years old, it just don't make sense. They look so fresh, so odd, so new; like they were only finished just before they opened the doors. What the fuck people must have made of this 50 years ago, Christ knows...these Surrealists were just the weirdest fish turned human that ever walked the globe.

Dada began as a questioning of the conventional values of Moral Beauty, Art and so on, every attempt by man to idealise his existence. As one of the Dada reviews said "We are against all attempts to create ideas greater than man". In their work, the Dadaists struck out at the religious pursuit of abstract qualities which their contemporaries believed in.

This exhibition brings together Dada and Surrealist art from about 1914 to 1968; in addition there's a lot of strange objects which belonged to the artists themselves Voodoo dolls, skulls, stuffed animals, odd medical books, comix, pictures, masks, for example.

Each of the 17 sections of the exhibition deals with a particular group of artists and features a display of some of the pages of the review produced by that group.

So not only do you get the art works but you get some insight into the whole scene that produced them, and the way Dada worked on different art forms. The greatest thing about Dada was that it made an impact in theatre, music, painting, sculpture and literature and each of these is featured in the exhibition.

As you go through the exhibition, which is in roughly chronological order, you get a good impression of the way the movement developed. The refreshing madness of the early European exhibits of

the '20's gives way to American exhibits from the 40's and 50's which seem, by comparison, laboured and self-indulgent. The early period is crammed with bizarre ideas, many of which are only half-explored. They are the product of troubled times, executed with a sense of loony urgency and a complete disregard for any audience reaction: unless it's shock.

The later American works show the effect of an affluent society. The original ideas are still there but lacking in humour. There's no longer

the inspired, lively quality but drab, over-intellectual work, taking itself far too seriously.

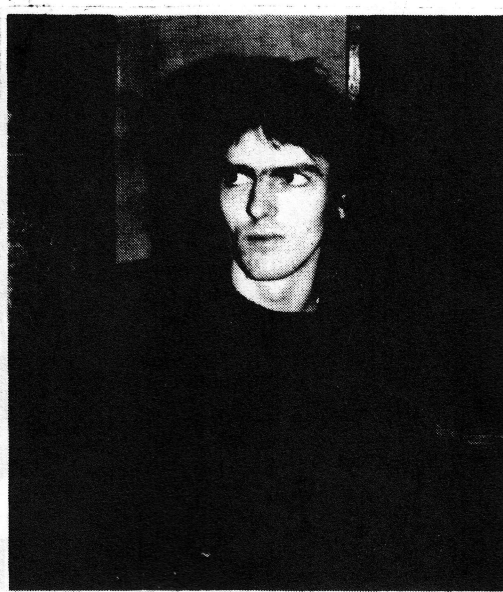
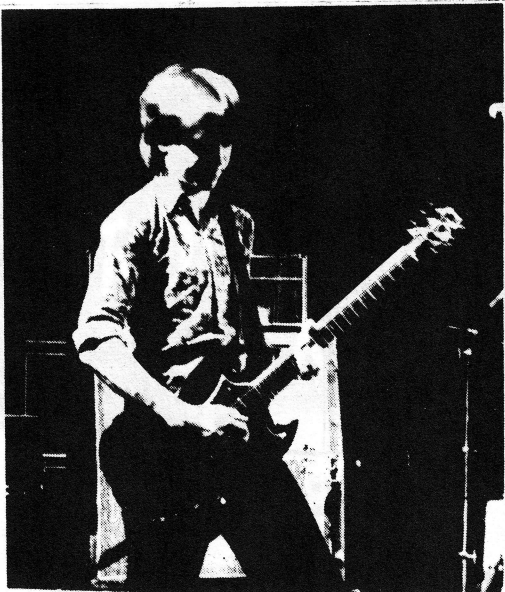
There are many obvious parallels between the hard times which inspired the Dada movement and the rise of Punk and the New Wave. The abandoning of conventional morals and cultural values; the belief in the supreme importance of the individual in society; the mad, vicious sense of humour; and the vitality of a movement brimming with ideas are well displayed in this exhibition.

There's so much that's amazing that it's hardly fair to single out any works as being particularly worthy of praise. Nevertheless, if you go, be sure not to miss the detail in Dali's paintings (A special prize will be given to anyone who correctly identifies a crustacean in any of Dali's pictures); or "The Murderous Aeroplane"; or the picture of God on a bicycle; or the autographed urinal; or the iron with nails in (The easiest way to rip your T-shirt) or the violin wrapped in bandages; or the dinner jacket with glasses filled with green fluid hung all over it; or the bust of the Angel of Anarchy....you get the picture...

There's so much to see here, so many brilliant ideas which have since been imitated, and accepted by the public...this is where it all began White Boy, get back to your roots.

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Wendy



"Hi, I'm Kimberly Ruw, and I'm in this article because I'm the Soft Boys' new guitarist"

"I'm Robyn Hitchcock, and I'm in it because my aunt's called Baxter."

ELSEWHERE IN this issue, Joe Strummer points the accusing finger at this mag for not covering Cambridge's local talent. We've been criticised for this more times than we care to remember, and in fact it's one of the things we aimed to do when this mag was set up. But the sad fact remains that in 1977 of all years, Cambridge stayed true to form and failed to work up any sort of scene/action of note. There's been Raw Records, but they haven't concerned themselves that much with local talent; what's the point when there's none to promote? Last year's student bands churned out the same sub-Hatfield meanderings interspersed with Soap On The Water, and this year the scene's stayed pretty much dormant, with only the Woodentops offering much hope for the future. The Users were heroes of early '76, but didn't take the train and are now biding their time. Well, sorry folks, there's nothing up here (yet) worth bothering about, ...except the Softboys.

Actually, it's pretty much an academic point that you didn't read about the Softboys a couple of issues ago. One rainy day I struggled down to the Rock Garden to do an interview, only to be confronted by an incoherent Robyn Hitchcock, revving up to support the Tyla Gang. When Jimmy and me finally tracked him down to the freezing courtyard of the Eagle, Cambridge's most roofless pub, the recorder broke down, and we ended up repeating the interview the next day in the Softboys' Control Room, a nine-inch square front parlour lined with egg-boxes. In a nutshell, the interview was about as weird as the band.

First of, it must be said this isn't an article on the Softboys as a Cambridge band, but as a band, full stop, 'cos potentially they're an important one. They're dark enough to combat all the so-called Powerpop that'll be gushing down your lugholes like standardised custard this year. What the Softboys, or the Soft Boys, as they call themselves, are about is psychedelia, which now looks as if it won't be the next big thing. Their songs are just poppy enough, but disturbed:

"Feel like asking a tree for an autograph/Feel like making love to a photograph/Photographs don't smell... ai oh ei... GIVE IT TO THE SOFTBOYS!"

Writer, singer and guitarist Robyn Hitchcock is the band's driving force, one of a line of occasional Cambridge weirds - Syd Barrett before him, and his influence weighs deeply over the Hitchcock brane. Does Robyn aim to be casualty material? He's been laying down the roots of living legend-dom by busking in the Market in beekeeper's helmet and facepaint, playing "Vicious", and lunging with his guitar at a innocent old ladies with shopping baskets: "You're not the sort of person I'd even wanna meet, you're so..." Yikes! abominable snowman in the market...

"I originally formed a band called the Beatles with the twins Dennis and Neville, who ran a radio repair shop..." No ho, likely story, is it? Don't bother trying with this guy, he's like that all the time. Eventually, he volunteers the information: "The band's about as erratic as a screwdriver, it can't miss, it's about being in the right place at the right time."

Original second/first? guitarist Alan Davies used to be Wang Bo Trotter. Bass player Andy Metcalf used to be the Pigworker. Drummer Morris Windsor was also called Morris Windsor. They all play their instruments with a plum. Kimberly Ruw has now taken up Alan's guitar, the latter having moved into another local band (as yet, little frequency), Duncan and the Darts. That's for the fax freaks, as Ja Mole would say.

Andy is capable of playing a variety of esoteric instruments, and although he tends to "try too hard" in his stage persona (Sounds words, not mine), he offers some sensible advice for pop-pickers: "If you go deep-sea diving, you take a pile of breadcrumbs instead of oxygen tanks, so you can breathe."

I remind him that on BBC 2's hallowed failure of yesteryear, Full House, a man once demonstrated that it's possible to bathe in offal. Rosalind, Robyn's lady, and a leading light in Maureen and the Meatpackers, an atomic doo-wop combo that is an integral and mysterious part of the Softboys circus, anyway, so this woman, alias Airborne Alice, takes up the theme:

The SOFTBOYS
Liver you can feel

"We're talking about liver you feel. It's no good feeling liver in breadcrumbs because, as you know, it spoils the texture.

NR: You know you can drown in grain. Can you drown in liver?

RH: If it was runny enough.

NR (probably a vampire): Because of all the blood inside!

MW: It's like trying to catch the soap in the bath.

RH: Sloth?

Alice: Yes... it's very sensual.

RH: Do you like that?

AA: Yes, in a sensual way. Not, in a sexuo-sensual way, but in a tactilio-sensual way. (Laughter)

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Robyn's verdict: "I've been dreaming about Baxters for years. You don't have any Norwegian relatives? You're not called Baxter?" Jimmy has an aunt called Baxter.

The - uh- 'scam' on the Soft Boys: PRESS RELEASE

'A retail history of the Soft Boys since Michaelmas Day. As of press datings the lager the better group 'Soft Boys' are rheumatic to be sighing in the breeze of a record company STOP As one who is close to the centre of the 'band' STOP I would like to say that they seem to be enmeshed in a casserole of 'Bigwigs'. Their next single, 'The Great Crustaceans' is reputedly produced by Elvis..uh.. Presley no Jake Riviera's new Suction label. Jake is reportedly very hazardous about the slime of the band's generals, but has the nerve to suggest hosepipe. There are rumours, too, of a coast-to-coast tour by the originally limited Maureen and the Meatpackers, the now legendary psychedelic doo-wop combo. The two bands, conducted Nick Love, appear in Brighton under the Buccaneer. Negative Reaction costs him 25p"

TUNE TO THE RECREATION OF THE CRUSTACEAN GENERATION

A few points of reference:

Syd Barrett, Television, Beefheart (the band occasionally do his 'Clear Spot'), John Cale (a far too similar version of 'Heartbreak Hotel' which people seem to like, but I'm none too keen on it, because ultimately it'll give people the wrong idea) and Steeleye Span. The Steel Eyed Fish are Hitchcock's favorite band, and at a recent gig, the spirit of Ashley Hutchings was resurrected when mummers and liggers arrived on-stage for a jigabout to 'Postman's Knock'. Expect the..uh...

Right now, Radar Records and Jake Riviera are taking an interest in the band, and they supported Elvis Castiglione at the Roundhouse free bingo, where they went down a treat, and where even the highly inert Nick Kent was seen to tap an eyeball in appreciation. So how will the band, who go professional this week, cope with success?

"Is there anything you want to know?" Item: a new electro. Will the train take the strain?

"The face of death is my best friend/It lurks behind my favourite bend/And though we meet we seldom speak/I've got a feeling he's unique..." (From their only follow-up single on Raw)



Robyn & Andy at the Roundhouse. (Photo: Jon)

We wanna be some anglepoise lamps. My favourite SBs number is called "I'm a Pigworker Mama" or words to that effect. I also like the one that mentions Steely Dan, and we all dig "Where Are The Prawns". "Down by the sea..."

JOE STRUMMER DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION? IT'S TWO IN THE MORNING AND THE GIMP NEXT DOOR'S PLAYING CSNY.

Also, I just found out my typewriter's got a margin release.

I hope you like the Softboys. In case they don't like you.

- Jon Romney / David Bragg

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ZIP-TONES RETURN and then go away...



THE MERRY bunch pictured above are the notorious ZIP-TONES, who reformed recently for a one-off farewell performance at the Cambridge Audio-Visual Arts Centre. The band backed singer Pete Sykes on a warped rendition of the evergreen "Louie Louie", or "Louie" as Pete called it before he was reminded. The only members of the original ZTs were synthesiser ace Sandy Crole and Johnny Malrousseau, who took up guitar duties. Johnny's fellow Woodentop, Wendy Shock, filled in on drums, and celebrated fanzine hack Charlie Chainsaw handled bass.

Tapes made of the show were found to be so offbeat they had to be jettisoned, but Johnny and Wendy assure their public that the Woodentops will be taking the world by storm when they make their debut in mid-February. Charlie Chainsaw's new band, the Buttocks, are currently rehearsing numbers for an EP on the new Wrench label. Pictured l to r: Sandy Crole, Johnny Malrousseau, Pete Sykes, Wendy Shock and Charlie Chainsaw.

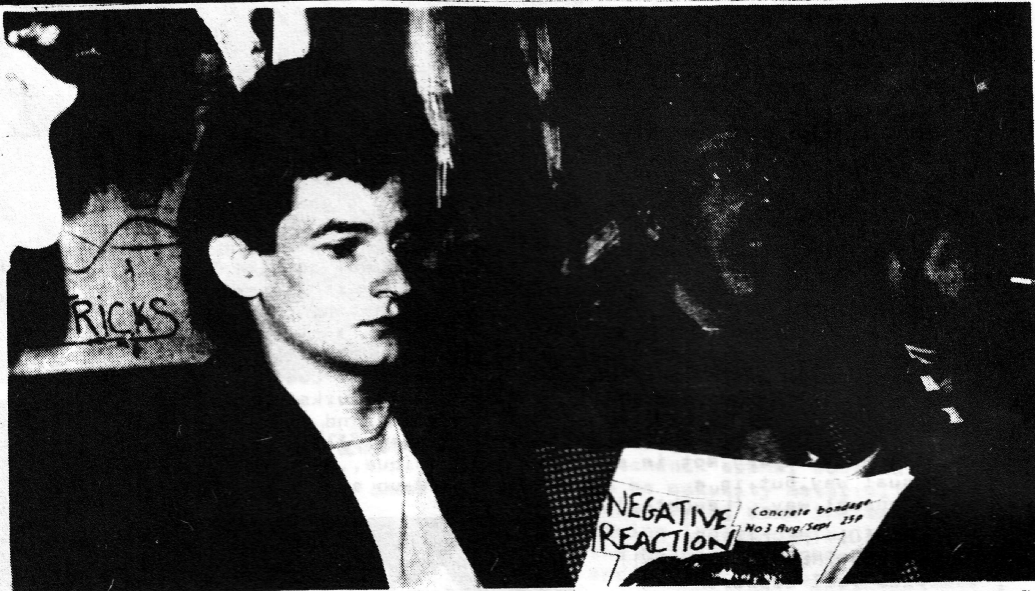
Albums

ROOGALATOR

ROOGALATOR Play It By Ear (Do It)

Not long ago, after playing one of their sessions, John Peel said, "That's Roogalator, showing the form that made them a name to drop about a year ago". It's a sign of the public's distraction that in these Days of the Quick Buck, Roogalator should still be a struggling band. It's also a sign of the band's strength; look at all the faltering groups calling it a day last year, muttering, "Yeah..welll..it's the bloody New Wave's fault.." Hell, Roogalator are good enough to appeal to any audience, and they're unique enough (sic) to resist being bracketed either. That's probably why it's taken 2 years for an album to surface, but... whoa! hang on there, 'cos it's every bit worth the wait.

Uh-oh...they've made the drastic mistake of kicking off side 1 with their most disjointed number, 'Get Ready for the Get Ready', which basically comes off as incoherent. It's the only duff track, but it's not helped by following it with 'Magicooe', which although snappier, still needs a lot of listening. Things get on course with the epic 'Cincinnati Fatback', but it's again misplaced,



"Oh no! Have you seen what they've said about us in here?" Nick Plytas (left) and Danny Adler.

an ace card played too soon. This take is far better than the Stiff EP version, natter, a chicken-picker instead of a glider, and Danny Adler's customary sunset guitar finale is great, as usual. Only the atmospheric rap at the end is completely thrown away; this still isn't the definitive version, because Adler fools around too much - ever heard an Ohio bluesman wish a Happy Chanuka? You can almost see the grins on

'Sweet Mama Kundalini' - 'gusha-gusha sweet delight' says it all, and it's so damn tight. 'Mind Breeding' is another of Danny's heavy 'get-it-together' messages, and a locomotive rhythm section backed with Nick Plytas' 60s jazz-sound organ gives it the feel of vintage Sly. Then there's 'Walking', a warm day, and Justin Hildreth sounding very relaxed on drums. Roogalator swing like no other band do, and it's immaculate, maybe the best track on the album.

LIVE REVIEWS

...Condensation drips from the ceiling ... "Why is everybody called Johnny! " unison screams, quivering with so much nervous energy. Someone told me "Little Dave's got a band, they're playing a school dance!..as soon as they set up the crowd is ten deep all round them. ...In the dressing-room afterwards, Dave's so keyed up and just plain fuckin' wasted that he ain't got the strength to put his shirt in a plastic bag...I do it for him..." You know what it's like", he mutters...trembling, are school dances always like this? so many kids, pushing, shouting, pogoing ...Dave's wearing a huge greatcoat, a scratched plastic face-visor, kid's plastic crash hat, jumping like an Oxfam shop on springs..." Why is Everybody called Johnny! "...

FAST BREEDER, audience surge forward singer-guitarist with ginger afrobut disappears, mike stand goes too... rhythm section MUST be prerecorded, they can't still be playing;;; it's a riot kids climbing anywhere to get a better view...chaos, amps shake, speaker lean dangerously... Dave pulling hideous faces, no wonder they call him Prince Charming ...They'll ban pogoing here after this I thought. They did...Dave leaps into the undulating mass, they lift him above their heads pass him round, still playing...climb onto a radiator...can't even see the band, fuck I can hear them though...Dave jumps onto a table narrowly missing a mixing desk...under his greatcoat, convent school blazer and tie...grimaces at the audience

FAST BREEDER

...Why Fast Breeder?...Under the head boy's desk, bassplayer (red, green, peroxide hair) screws groupie, grunt squeal grunt squeal stay cool, pretend not to notice when head boy walks in...

No stage no lights sweat-thick atmosphere "Come on you're not at school now!" (With this band who needs reminding) Pulsating dub beat,

pressing round him...hear -throb simpleton...hot licks, slick riffs out-of-phase and meaty...hard fast cold metal slit-wrist city..." Why is Everybody called Johnny! "

They'll be playing near you soon SEE THEM THEY'RE AMAZING

Wendy

On side 2, 'All Aboard' isn't that much better than the Stiff version, which had an entertaining toast on the end, but there's a weird, atonal Plytas piano solo, very interesting and jerky. Next up, 'Water' is another hedonist's anthem, some really fine drumming, and Julian Scott coming up front to show his stuff on some ultra-nifty bass patterns. I'm not sure about the Virgin single that turns up again, Nick Plytas' 'Love and the Single Girl'; it's an odd one out in this context, and his singing's still a bit nasally congested, but now he's left the band, maybe he'll set up a combo to display his own considerable talents. Okay, then there's a couple more excursions in the band's involved brand of hi-speed funk, with pyrotechnic performances all round, and then it winds up with a thunderclap and 'Change', in which a truly weird 'Rag Tag and Bobtail' intro slips into another swing sermon, with some of Danny's best lyrics.

The only cause for complaint is that it sounds more like a set of numbers than a fully-formulated artefact in the album format (hmm, 'shades' of, uh, Nick Kent there); but the contents make this the most imaginative and most enjoyable debut album by a British band this year. It's not just a backlog clearance of old material, because with new songs like 'Zero Heroes', the next one should be just as good. As a three-piece, they're going to sound weirder than ever, so don't waste time, get yourself some of that gusha-gusha sound.

-Jon Romney.

DEKE LEONARD/ICEBERG Hope & Anchor

Deke Leonard is an officer and a gentleman, and if you want proof, look no further than the fact that he once paid good money for a copy of NR. If that doesn't convince you, check out 'Iceberg', the album he made in '73, while on sabbatical from Man. It's as cool and hard as the name suggests, and as a live band, too, the original Iceberg certainly blew Man offstage. I saw both bands at the good ol' Golders Green Hippodrome, and Micky Jones' cosmic meanderings came across pretty poorly in comparison with the deadeye riff 'n' lickin' of 'Razor Blade and Rattlesnake', which sums up the sting and flow of their sound. After that, Deke returned to Man, doing them a power of good, and contributed the highlights of their last few albums.

But the new revived Iceberg is a whole new hazard to shipping. Pared down to a three-piece, the rhythm section comprising Rockfield favourites Lincoln Carr and Terry Williams, a lot of the old flow has been abandoned in favour of the harder cut-and-thrust jab. The band's tightness, sustained power and additionally, Deke's stretched-out nerve-edged vocals all give the band that rare element of tension that's missing in the bludgeoning of so many New Wave bands. Some-

ENO

BEFORE AND AFTER SCIENCE: Brian Eno (Polydor)

When "Here Come The Warm Jets" came out, I was pleasantly surprised that the background weirdo of Roxy had actually managed to produce something that stood up on its own. When "Another Green World" came out I thought that Eno had reached the zenith of his achievement. Well, we all make mistakes... Before and After Science is Eno in a new Dimension... Eno meets the space-funk monster and, surprisingly enough, lives to tell a mystical tale...

What I've always liked about Eno's work is the fact that it manages to be structured and continually changing at the same time. Starting with a simple song format, Eno adds little details until an incomparably complex piece of music is produced. His work is not ambitious, in the way that neo-

"Classical" rock is, its complexity lies in the overlaying of lots of simple melodies. The beauty lies in the matching of instrument to melody...

Back to the album...

side one is a new departure, Eno describes as "My version of Beefheart". The beat is perfectly irregular, precise, bassy jerks, the music stumbles over metallic drums and odd clanking sounds... vocals are stronger than I thought possible: perfect, slurred harmonies on the disturbing chorus of "No one Receiving"; "In these metal days, in these metal ways..." or really meaty on "The King's Lead Hat": what Roxy should have done after "Virginia Plain". Plus the customary Majesty of the Orient in the lyrics and the hallowed whining synthesiser.

side two opens with "Here he comes" the perfect example of a simple rock-song format crammed with invention and mood changes. The rest of the side is far sparser and progressively softer. The simplicity of the lyrics belies the depth of thought and emotion behind them. "The radio is silent, so are we"... the creation of mood and event with disarming directness... the resonance of the voice and the coincidence of melody forming chords that appear as if by accident, yet with an unquestionable correctness that makes you feel it always HAD to happen that way... it's 9.45a.m. and I could go on but there's no room, if I could have only one album right now, this'd be it... by the way, E.G. I still ain't got these pictures..... Wendy



Deke at the Hope, with hippies (pictured right, man...) Pic: Jon

times the sustained mood led to monotony, and it must be said, a lot of Deke's songs can be awfully sa samey. Still, time cures many ills, and the pacing will probably take clearer shape by and by. A lot of the numbers came from Deke's second solo outing 'Kamikaze', among which Tommy Riley's 'Louisiana Hoedown' was especially healthy; you also got two renderings of 'Hard Way to Live' for your money and assorted tried and true 50s tunes, newies, and more besides. 'The Ride and The View' was starker and meatier than the original, and was greeted rapturously by the Man crowd...

(...who, by the way, were out in

force, idiot dancing and shaking their mops, eyes closed, to the solos, like it was the Mystic Revelation of Herman Kesse. It's only rock n' roll, maaan... They're probably still sweeping up the dandruff now. Which made it all the weirder to go home on a Tube train packed to the gills with the outpourings of the Rainbow after the Clash concert. Culture dislocation is the crisis of today...)

Right, well, 'Kamikaze' is currently languishing in your local cut-out racks, and I suggest you go and check it out, and the new band as well, 'cause they're the breed that sinks ships, no less. I mean it, bach!

-Jon Romney.

NEW (crime) WAVE

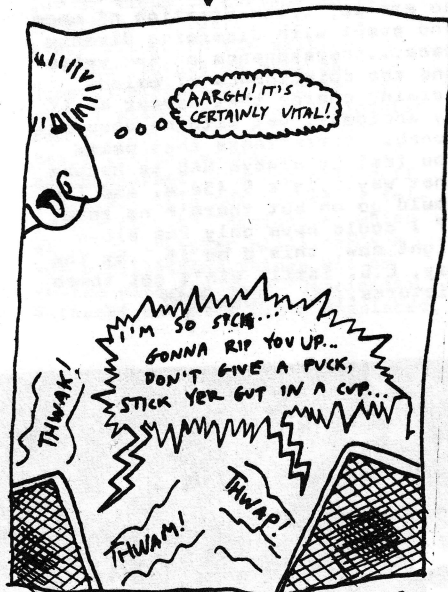


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JON'S BIT

O God It's us again just in time for 1978, N.R. presents its glossy new format, a good way of filling up space. Some of the interviews aren't quite as fresh, up to the moment as they might be - let's just say they've matured -but there's plenty of vital stuff to be gleaned from 'em so get stuck in.

First of all here are the eagerly awaited results of last issues Rich Kids competition- there were two entries, but that's alright 'cos the band haven't sent us the record yet.. Never mind though it's probably been deleted by now anyhow.

To the many readers who wrote in to complain that it was a dumb competition, we thoroughly agree and wish we'd never started the thing.

Ho, ho Wendy let's be havin' ya....

WENDY'S BIT.

....as is only fair since I do most of the fuckin' typing here.the time has come to define the negative reaction.....

we don't believe in revolution, it's an old idea...got no place today...if you believe in it you're no better than a fuckin' old crustacean...whatcha gonna do when you've smashed the Establishment?...put another in its place...and what happens to the individual?...he gets even more repressed because the Revolutionaries get shit-scared he's gonna say summat they don't wanna hear...

and all you want is more money in your pocket.. Don't follow leaders who give you some-one to blame...they're only in it for their own gain.

What does money in your pocket mean when you can't think

for yourself?...when there's a nuclear reactor at the bottom of the street?...when there's no fish in the rivers?...and they say the kids on the street don't read: it's about time they learned about all the shit that's being spouted in their name.what's all this crap about the kids who can't read being the heroes of today?...a long time ago, Zappa

This was pasted up at a slow 16 hour sitting, and we celebrated afterwards with a pancake breakfast.



said that the only way to change the way things are is to go into a library and educate yourself...where's the guts in sitting on street corners gobbing at old ladies?...the change is gonna come, sure, we all wanna change the world...but the change ain't gonna come from the kids that just drop out and do nothing...you gotta get up offa your ass and do something if you want the world to be more like you...well, that's enough...be true to yourselves

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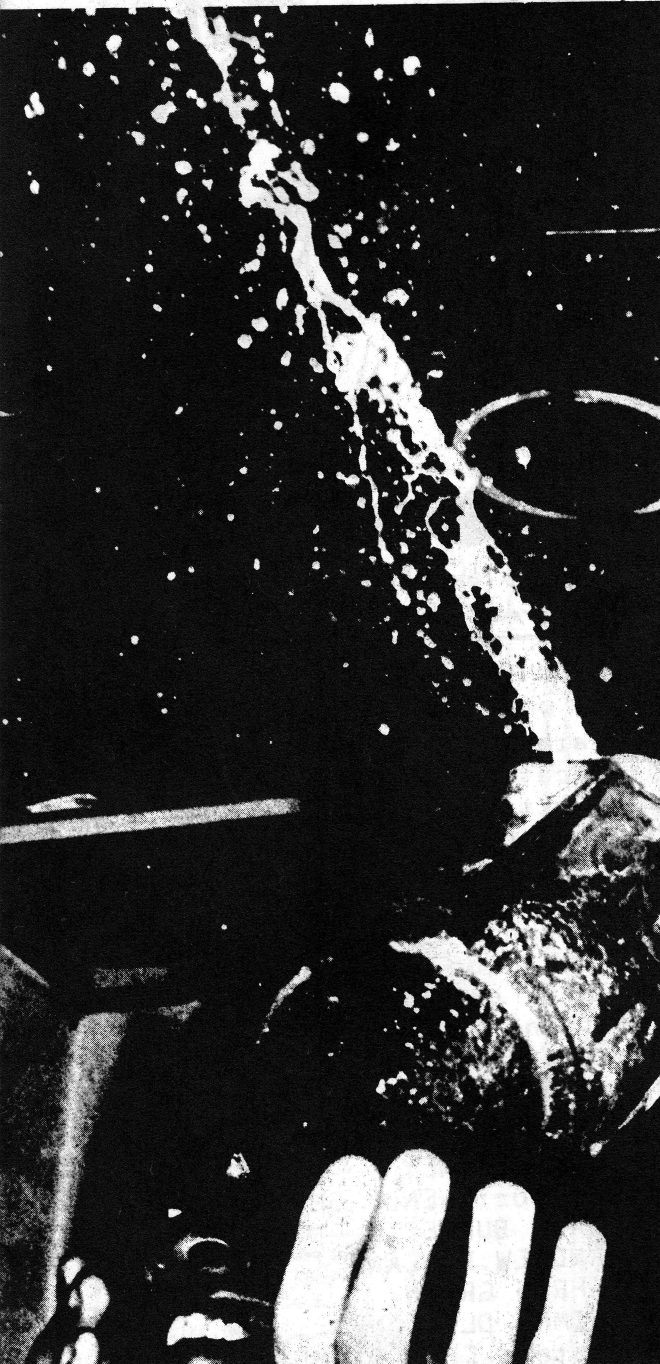
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